

Serial No. - 09/651,498
Art Unit - 1763

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's guidance in overcoming the new matter objections raised in the previous Office Action and the Examiner's acknowledgement that the language of the present amendment is fully supported by the original specification and drawings in that it does not introduce the concepts of "heat regulation zones" or "lower and upper bounds" of the heat regulating element. Similarly, subject matter has not been added to the drawings. The new claims define the present invention with claim recitations that find direct support in the application, as originally filed. No new matter has been entered.

Regarding the recitations of the new claims, applicants note that none of the cited art of record shows or fairly suggests the collective recitations of the two new independent claims. Sugimoto et al., for example, teaches an arrangement where an air supply conduit is arranged about the spindle and is closed and sealed at its lower bound, with the exception of a small opening that is sized and configured to permit discharge of air from the conduit as an aid to the bearing surrounding the spindle. The air supply conduit of Sugimoto is expressly presented to control the supply of air through the conduit to the lower surface of the substrate. The conduit does not present an open framework that avoids degradation of the exhaust gas profile defined by the wafer processing bowl. Rather, the conduit of Sugimoto establishes a new, controlled exhaust gas supply that is defined by the air flow adjusting unit and the damper, which by their very nature alter the exhaust gas profile defined by the wafer processing bowl.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that, in view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to resolve efficiently any formal matters or to discuss any aspects of the application or of this response. Otherwise, early notification of allowable subject matter is respectfully solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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